Amendments in the Claims

1. (withdrawn) An artificial agent leasing method, comprising the steps of : (a) entering into a lease agreement with a user to provide artificial agents wherein each agent has a limited lifetime; (b) creating a plurality of artificial agents; (c) distributing to the user a first set of artificial agents from the plurality artificial agents created in step (b); (d) subsequently distributing a second set of artificial agents to the user to replace artificial agents from the first set of artificial agents; and (e) repeating steps (b) through (d) for the duration of the lease agreement.

2. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the artificial agents provide recommendations for at least one of buying and selling financial instruments.

3. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the lease agreement has a duration of at least one of a week, a month and a year.

4. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein the user is at least one of an independent investor, an institutional investor, a hedge fund manager and a market maker.

5. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each artificial agent has a predictability value.

6. (withdrawn) The method of claim 5, wherein the predictability value is based on a multivariate landscape generated from historical data.

7. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein step (d) is implemented when artificial agents from the first set of artificial agents are retired.

8. (withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein any one artificial agent is retired when a predictability value associated therewith falls below a predetermined value.

9. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein a price feedback indicator is associated with each artificial agent.

10. (withdrawn) The method of claim 9, wherein the price feedback indicator is determined by querying the artificial agent as to how a recommendation would change in view of various price scenarios.

11. (withdrawn) The method of claim 9, wherein the price feedback indicator is represented by a symbol from the group consisting of $+,-,>,<$ and n.

12. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each artificial agent is pre-trained.

13. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein steps (c) and (d) are implemented, at least in part, over an electronic network.

14. (withdrawn) The method of claim 1, wherein each artificial agent is based on a technical template.

15. (withdrawn) An artificial agent leasing system, comprising:

an artificial agent factory, the artificial agent factory periodically creating a pool of

artificial agents; means for distributing a first set of artificial agents from the pool of

artificial agents; means for determining when to retire any one artificial agent; and means

for distributing at least one new artificial agent from the pool of artificial agents, different

from any artificial agent in the first set of artificial agents.

16. (withdrawn) The system of claim 15, further comprising an artificial agent management

system.

17. (withdrawn) The system of claim 16, wherein the artificial agent management system

comprises a graphical user interface.

18. (withdrawn) The system of claim 16, wherein the artificial agent management system is

in communication with an automated trade clearing system.

19. (withdrawn) The system of claim 15, wherein the agent factory creates artificial agents

each having a predictability value.

20. (withdrawn) The system of claim 15, wherein each agent is self-monitoring.

21. (withdrawn) The system of claim 15, wherein the means for distributing comprises at

least one of a diskette, a CD ROM and an electronic network.

22. (withdrawn) The system of claim 15, wherein each distributed artificial agent is

pretrained with a predetermined decision making strategy.

23. (withdrawn) The system of claim 22, wherein the strategy results in a recommendation to one of buy, sell and hold a financial instrument.

24. (currently amended) A consulting system, comprising:

a~~ means for distributing artificial agents; and

an agent factory, wherein

the agent factory monitors recommendations provided by a first artificial agent, and

the agent factory comprises a management system having a graphical user interface ~~capable of~~ configured to display~~ing~~ the recommendations,

the management system further determining ~~if and when~~ whether the first artificial agent is performing below a predetermined predictability value and ~~if the first artificial~~ ~~agent is performing below the~~

in response to performance of the first artificial agent below the predetermined predictability value, retiring the first artificial agent and

making a second artificial agent available for distribution.

25. (original) The consulting system of claim 24, wherein the means for distributing is at least one of a diskette, a CD ROM and an electronic network.

26. (original) The consulting system of claim 24, wherein the artificial agents monitor their expected future performance using a predictability value.

27. (original) The consulting system of claim 26, wherein the predictability value is based on mutual-information-based reconstruction of a multivariate landscape.

28. (original) The consulting system of claim 27, wherein a price time series of a financial instrument is used to generate the multivariate landscape.

29. (original) The consulting system of claim 24, wherein a curriculum vitae is associated with each artificial agent.

30. (original) The consulting system of claim 24, wherein distributing artificial agents is effected in accordance with a leasing service agreement.

31. (currently amended) A method of consulting using artificial agents, comprising the steps of: accepting a request to supply artificial agents;

creating the artificial agents;

distributing the artificial agents;

monitoring an expected future performance of the artificial agents that have been distributed; and

~~if the expected future performance of one or more of the artificial agents that has been distributed has fallen below a predetermined level~~ in response to performance of at

least one artificial agent below a predetermined predictability value, creating new

artificial agents and distributing the new artificial agents.

32. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein the expected future performance is monitored

at a user location.

33. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein the request is one of a subscription and a

leasing agreement.

34. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein each artificial agent provides a financial

trading recommendation.

35. (original) The method of claim 34, wherein each artificial agent has a distinct trading

strategy.

36. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein the step of distributing comprises

transmitting data over an electronic network.

37. (original) The method of claim 36, wherein the electronic network is the Internet.

38. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein the expected future performance of an

artificial agent is associated with a predictability of a decision making strategy.

39. (original) The method of claim 31, wherein at least one of the artificial agents has a

strategy that is designed by a user.

40. (withdrawn) A method for creating artificial agents, comprising the steps of : (a) testing the effectiveness of different technical trading rules on a window of historical data and evaluating the predictability of each trading rule; (b) selecting a subset of the different technical trading rules based at least on one of (i) level of predictability and (ii) diversity; (c) creating artificial agents based, respectively, on each of the technical trading rules in the subset, each of the artificial agents so created being represented by signal; and (d) applying the signal to a pre-trained neural network.

41. (withdrawn) The method of claim 40, further comprising analyzing the predictability of the resulting artificial agents after step (d).

42. (withdrawn) The method of claim 41, further comprising choosing as final artificial agents only those artificial agents having a predictability value greater than a predetermined level.

43. (withdrawn) The method of claim 40, wherein the historical data is a price time series of a financial instrument.

44. (withdrawn) The method of claim 40, wherein a predetermined number of agents are created at a given time.

45. (withdrawn) The method of claim 44, wherein the predetermined number is five.

46. (original) A system for providing financial advice, comprising:

artificial agents created based, respectively, at least in part on different technical analysis

templates being applied to historical price time series information; and

a management system, in communication with real time market data, operable to (i)

receive the artificial agents, (ii) display characteristic information with respect to each

received artificial agent and (iii) inform a user of a specific recommendation made by

at least one of the artificial agents.

47. (original) The system of claim 46, wherein the management system is operable as a tool

for at least one of an individual investor, an institutional investor, a fund manager and a

market maker.

48. (original) The system of claim 46, wherein a predictability value is associated with each

artificial agent.

49. (original) The system of claim 46, further comprising an automated trade clearing system

in communication with the management system.

50. (original) The system of claim 46, wherein the specific recommendation is one of buy,

sell and hold.

51. (original) The system of claim 46, wherein a price feedback indicator is associated with

each artificial agent.

52. (original) The system of claim 51, wherein the price feedback indicator is determined by querying the artificial agent as to how a recommendation would change in view of various price scenarios.

53. (original) The system of claim 51, wherein the price feedback indicator is represented by a symbol from the group consisting of +,-, > , < and n.

54. (original) A system for providing financial advice, comprising: an artificial agent created based at least in part on a technical analysis template applied to historical price time series information; and a management system, in communication with real time market data, operable to display characteristic information with respect to the artificial agent and inform a user of a specific recommendation made by the artificial agent.

55. (original) The system of claim 54, wherein a predictability value is associated with the artificial agent.

56. (original) The system of claim 54, wherein the artificial agent is self-monitoring.

57. (original) The system of claim 54, wherein a price feedback indicator is associated with the artificial agent.

58. (original) A method for providing financial advice, comprising the steps of : creating an artificial agent based at least in part on a technical analysis template applied to historical price time series information of a financial instrument; determining an expected future

performance of the artificial agent based on a trading strategy associated with the artificial agent; applying the trading strategy to the financial instrument; and retiring the artificial agent when the expected future performance falls below a predetermined threshold.

59. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein the expected future performance is based on a predictability value.

60. (original) The method of claim 58, wherein the artificial agent is self-monitoring.

61. (original) The method of claim 58, further comprising determining the artificial agent's price feedback indicator by: (a) presenting the agent with different hypotheses about the price of the financial instrument during a subsequent trading period; (b) determining the artificial agent's recommendation for each of the different hypotheses; and (c) analyzing the resulting recommendations.

62. (withdrawn) An artificial agent system, comprising: an artificial agent management system in communication with real time data; and a plurality of artificial agents stored in the management system, wherein each artificial agent is associated with a predictability value and wherein each artificial agent is self-monitoring, whereby any artificial agent of the plurality of agents stored in the management system is capable of retiring itself from further decision making.

63. (withdrawn) The system of claim 62, wherein the predictability value changes in view of the real time data.

64. (withdrawn) The system of claim 62, further comprising user interface screens for monitoring the plurality of artificial agents.

65. (withdrawn) The system of claim 62, wherein the real time data is financial market data.

66. (withdrawn) The system of claim 65, wherein the management system is operable to display a price feedback indicator associated with each artificial agent.

67. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein a curriculum vitae is associated with each artificial agent.

68. (previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the predictability value changes in view of real time market data.

69. (previously presented) The system of claim 48, wherein the predictability value is based on mutual-information-based reconstruction of a multivariate landscape.

70. (previously presented) The system of claim 69, wherein a price series of a financial instrument is used to generate the multivariate landscape.

71. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein each artificial agent is self monitoring.

72. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein the artificial agents monitor their expected future performance using a predictability value.

73. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein each agent retires itself when its predictability falls below a predetermined threshold.

74. (previously presented) The system of claim 73, wherein retired agents are replaced by new agents from an agent factory.

75. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein each artificial agent is pre-trained with a predetermined decision making strategy.

76. (previously presented) The system of claim 46, wherein at least one of the agents has a strategy that is designed by the user.